



**Testimony
Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA)
Before the
Labor Committee
Public Hearing
March 3, 2009**

The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA) opposes HB-6534, An Act Concerning Labor Union Authorization Card Checks.

CWWA opposes legislation that would require employers to recognize a labor union solely through a so-called "card check process." Under such a process, workers would be asked to sign union cards in the presence of a union organizer or member and may feel intimidated and pressured to sign the card.

Under the National Labor Relations Act, a government-supervised secret ballot election must be utilized to recognize a union as a collective bargaining unit once the union has collected authorization cards signed by 30% of the employees. In addition, an employer may decide to recognize the union based on presentation of a majority of employee-signed union authorization cards. This strikes an appropriate balance.

CWWA supports open communication between management and employees and fully recognizes the right of employees to organize and elect a third-party organization to represent them. However, the election of an organization to represent employees as their exclusive bargaining representative should be conducted by secret ballot. The secret ballot is the foundation of the modern democratic process, guaranteeing the freedom to vote according to one's true beliefs without fear of retribution.

"Card check" legislation would take away existing safeguards now assured under federal law and leave workers unprotected from outside influence and pressure. We are concerned that HB-6534 is aimed at denying employees the right to vote in a secret ballot election supervised by the National Labor Relations Board and we therefore oppose the bill.

The Connecticut Water Works Association, Inc. (CWWA) is an association of public water supply utilities serving more than 500,000 customers, or population of about 2½ million people, located throughout Connecticut. Membership in the Association is open to all Connecticut water utilities: investor-owned, municipal and regional authorities. As purveyors of public water supplies, our members have an obligation to provide sufficient quantities of high-quality water at a reasonable cost to consumers of the communities served.